(d) the conditions laid for this contract with regard to construction and toll collection;

(e) who is responsible for constructing overbridge/underbridge for the pedestrian on the said stretch;

(f) whether it is a fact that pedestrian have to fall prey to the accidents due to the dispute between the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and the contractor; and

(g) the action being taken by Government in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Delhi-Gurgaon Access Controlled Highway has provisions for adequate number of signages placed at designated locations to guide motorists and pedestrians, W-Beam crash barrier and lighting arrangement, Pedestrian underpasses at four locations and Foot over Bridges at two locations keeping pedestrian safety in mind. In addition, other underpasses/viaducts are also available for pedestrian crossing at flyover locations.

(c) and (d) M/s Jaypee-DSC Venture Ltd. is the Concessionaire who is responsible for development and maintenance of the Delhi-Gurgaon Project Highway on NH-8 on BOT (toll) basis. The Concessionaire is entitled to levy, collect and retain the user fee on and from the date of commercial operation, and until the termination date as specified in the agreement. As per the provision of the Concession agreement, the user fee realized by the concessionaire in excess of 1,30,000 pcu per day in any Toll Plaza shall be shared equally between NHAI and the Concessionaire.

(e) Four pedestrians' underpasses and two Foot over Bridges (FOBs) have been provided by the Concessionaire. The construction of additional five Foot Over Bridges has been entrusted to the Government of Haryana by NHAI as deposit work. The additional Foot Over Bridges and Underpasses are funded by NHAI.

(f) No, Sir.

(g) Does not arise.

Sea freight charges

†1124. SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the sea freight charges have seen drastic reduction during the last few months;

(b) if so, the estimates of this reduction between July, 2008 and January, 2009;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the extent of reduction in the sea freight charges alongwith details of routes between countries affected by it; and

(d) the main reasons for their reduction?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) The ship freight on International Waterways is continuously declining during the last few months. This is especially so for the Drybulk sector where the drop in freight/charter rates which commenced from August, 2008 took a steep fall in September, October, November and December, 2008.

(b) and (c) As far as liner sector is concerned, the decrease is ranging between 70.96% to 78.57% on India-Europe Sector, 50% to 87.5% on India-Far East Sector and 50% to 78.57% on the India-Middle East Sector. 50-70% from Indian sub-continent to Far East sector, Middle East sector and Europe sector. Similarly, the freight is also declining on the return legs.

The dry bulk sector has also been most affected during the period in question. The Baltic Dry Index (BDI) serves as an indicator of the dry bulk market and its steep fall reflects the freight situation in the dry bulk market. The overall fall in BDI from July, 2008 to January, 2009 works out to a fall of 89.87% in December, 2008. This index fell from 8934 in July, 2008 to 743 December, 2008. The index improved in January, 2009 to 905, but the levels are far below breakeven levels for bulk carrier owners.

With reference to the Tanker sector of Baltic Dirty Tanker Index was 1866 as on 01st July, 2008 and 611 as on 30th January, 2009, which allowing for a 30% allowance for worldscale flat rate change from January, 2009 reflects a drop of 57.43% during this period. The Baltic Clean Tanker Index figures prevailing for the same dates are 1454 and 598 respectively, which allowing for a 30% allowance for worldscale flat rate change from January, 2009 a drop of 46.53%.

(d) The decrease in freight charges is on account of the following reasons:—

(i) The financial crisis which originated in United States of America and has spread to Europe and other countries.

(ii) China, a major engine for growth has had a large stockpile of iron ore and coal.

(iii) The prices of major traded commodities, the example, iron ore, steel, other ores, metals etc. have collapsed due to lack of demand, primary industries have been affected the most and slump in demand and high inventory or raw materials of these industries has affected the trade in these commodities.

(iv) Trade has also been hampered by the lack of confidence between Banks from whom the Letters of Credit are routed.

(v) In Tanker trade, there has been a fall in demand.

(vi) Certain commodities such as Sugar, Rice, Maize, Soya etc. have been banned for export.

Ship owners are now receiving returns far below breakeven levels for their vessels. While instances of bankruptcies have occurred of international ship owners, the Indian industry is struggling to cope with the downturn.

Pending NH projects

†1125. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out of the sanctioned length of 30,000 kms. for road projects of National Highways, a length of 9,000 kms. is pending due to land disputes, clearance from Forest Department, etc.;

(b) if so, the steps taken by concerned departments to overcome these reasons;

(c) the targets fixed for completion of the entire project; and

(d) the number of meetings held by Government with the concerned States during last year and the level of the officials with whom the meetings took place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) The status of implementation of a total length of 32939 kms of National Highways identified by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), under various phases of National Highways Development Project (NHDP) is indicated in the given Statement-I (*See* below). Out of a total length of 6283 kms under implementation, 4/6 laning has been completed for a partial length of 2130 kms. The reasons for delay in completion of certain stretches include that due to delay in acquisition of land, utility shifting, environment and forest clearances, poor performance of contractors etc.

(b) The steps taken to expedite the projects are indicated in the given Statement-II (*See* below).

(c) NHAI has completed 4 laning of almost 98% of Golden Quadrilateral and the entire 4 laning of Golden Quadrilateral is targeted for December, 2009. NHDP Phase II comprising North-South East-West corridor is also targeted for substantial completion by December, 2009. Target dates of completion for other phases of NHDP are as under:—

NHDP Phase III	—	December, 2013
NHDP Phase V	—	December, 2012
NHDP Phase VI	—	December, 2015
NHDP Phase VII	—	December, 2014

(d) The details of meetings at the level of Minister and Secretary taken with the State Governments are indicated in the given Statement. (*See* below). Meetings were also held with

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